

Political Attitudes of Arab Citizens in North Africa

Mahmoudreza Rahbarqazi

Department of Political Sciences, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran
Email: m.rahbarghazi@ase.ui.ac.ir

Seyed Javad Emamjomehzadeh

Department of Political Sciences, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran
Email: javad@ase.ui.ac.ir

Hossein Masoudnia

Department of Political Sciences, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran
Email: h.masoudnia@ase.ui.ac.ir

Summary. Theories of social capital, government performance, Islamic values, and globalization are among the most important tools that can be used to help explain individuals' political attitudes. The present research attempts to address the effects of the abovementioned factors on the political attitude of Arab citizens using the Arab Barometer Wave IV data. The results showed that only 23.2% of citizens disagreed with a democratic political system, while 70.3% and 60.1% expressed their opposition to authoritarian and Shari'ah-based systems. Results of the final model of research indicated that memberships in social associations, on the one hand, increased the tendency of individuals to support authoritarian and law-based political systems and, on the other hand, did not have any significant effect on the tendency toward supporting a democratic political system. It was concluded that improving economic performance not only affected the promotion of the Shari'ah-based political system, but that Political Performance also reduced the inclinations toward Shari'ah and authoritarianism. Furthermore, Political Performance increased the tendency of individuals to favor a democratic system. In addition, although individuals' support for a Shari'ah-based political system had increased, Islamic values did not act as a barrier

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that would keep individuals away from favoring a democratic political system. Among the variables of globalization, the expansion of communication reduced people's tendencies toward Shari'ah and authoritative political systems, along with a positive effect on strengthening support for democratic systems. Ultimately, Westernization only affected the shrinking support of some Shari'ah-based political systems.

Keywords: Social Capital, Government Performance, Islamic Values, Globalization, Political Systems.

Arabų piliečių politinės nuostatos Šiaurės Afrikos valstybėse

Santrauka. Socialinio kapitalo, vyriausybės veiklos, islamo vertybių ir globalizacijos teorijos yra vienos iš svarbiausių priemonių, kurios gali būti naudojamos paaiškinti asmenų politinėms pažiūroms. Šis tyrimas, remiantis Arabų barometro „Wave IV“ duomenimis, bando išsiaiškinti minėtų veiksnių poveikį arabų piliečių politinėms nuostatomis. Rezultatai parodė, kad tik 23,2 proc. piliečių nesutinka su demokratine politine sistema, o atitinkamai 70,3 proc. ir 60,1 proc. apklaustųjų išreiškė nepritarimą autoritarinėms ir šariatu paremtoms sistemoms. Galutinio tyrimo modelio rezultatai parodė, kad narystė socialinėse asociacijose, viena vertus, padidina individų polinkį palaikyti autoritarines ir šariato įstatymais pagrįstas politines sistemas, tačiau, kita vertus, neturėjo reikšmingos įtakos polinkiui remti demokratinės politinės sistemas. Buvo padaryta išvada, kad geresni ekonominiai rodikliai turi įtakos šariatu pagrįstos politinės sistemos rėmimui, o geresni vyriausybės efektyvumo rodikliai sumažina paramą šariatu ir autoritarizmui. Be to, geresni vyriausybės efektyvumo rodikliai padidino asmenų polinkį palankiai vertinti demokratinę sistemą. Taip pat, nors asmenų paramą šariatu paremtai politinei sistemai didina pritarimas islamo vertybėms, šis kintamasis nebuvo kliūtis, kuri mažintų asmenų palankumą demokratinę politinei sistemai. Tarp globalizacijos kintamųjų komunikacijos plėtra sumažino žmonių pritarimą šariatu paremtoms ir autoritarinėms politinėms sistemoms, taip pat turėjo teigiamą poveikį stipresnei paramai demokratinėms sistemoms. Galiausiai vakarietiškas lėmė tik mažesnę paramą kai kurioms šariatu paremtoms politinėms sistemoms.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: socialinis kapitalas, valdžios efektyvumas, islamiškosios vertybės, globalizacija, politinės sistemos.

Introduction

It is hard to deny the importance of Islamic values in the Middle East. The evidence in recent years not only shows that joining terrorist groups is increasing among Islamists, but it has been observed that the Middle East's political perspective is increasingly influenced by the political mobilization of Islamist movements. What we have already observed in the Middle East and North Africa can be defined

in the context of Islamic Resurgence¹ and Islamic Activism.² Both terms seem to refer to a similar phenomenon. Also, it is obvious that the attempt to bring about social and political changes in the states of the Middle East and North Africa is mainly shaped by the supporters of Islamic ideologies. The term “Islamic ideology” is a new ideology belonging to the modern world and is defined through the politicization of Islam. Political Islam can be considered as a discourse organized around the central concept of the Islamic state. Islamists cover a range of events, from the emergence of an Islamic mentality to a full-fledged effort to rebuild society in accordance with Islamic principles.³

The development of the demand for democracy and social and economic development in the Middle East and North Africa appears to be increasing in the light of domestic and global developments, and this has pushed the rulers of the region. In the same vein, during the recent decades, some inefficient governments in the region have caused widespread public discontent due to their reluctance to respond to these demands; and this has resulted in the emergence of the Arab Spring in some Arab countries. Sometimes, of course, some regional governments attempt to demonstrate that they are consistent with some of the criteria of democracy, but the reality is that the countries of such regions are predominantly run by governments that want to maintain the status quo and try to advance their interests through an authoritarian political system.⁴ Any society is different from another, and their political development is based on their own

¹ Huntington SP., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Restructuring of World Order*, New York: Simon and Shuster, 1996.

² Wickham CR., *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt*, Columbia University Press, 2002.

³ Sayyid SA., *Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, Zed Books Ltd., 2015.

⁴ King SJ., *The New Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa*, Indiana University Press, 2009.

unique criteria, norms, and circumstances. Some of these societies are slower, while others get closer to democratic standards.

In this regard, conducting such research is significant for several reasons. First, it explains the political preferences of those who form the basis of supporting political parties in these countries. Second, the implementation of the Shari'ah seems to be an important intellectual element of the ideas of the Muslim world that has grown from the previous years into a need to implement it with the formulation of new constitutions; therefore, the study of the citizens' tendencies toward a Shari'ah-based, authoritarian, and democratic political systems also reflects the level of popular support for competing political models. Finally, the backwardness of political development in the North African countries has led to some religious extremist groups in these countries to focus primarily on Shari'ah-based or authoritarian political systems. It seems that this research can provide an idea for political development in the Gulf and North Africa by examining why people support Shari'ah, authoritarian, or democratic systems in authoritarian political environments.

In order to investigate the causes of the people's tendencies towards Shari'ah-based, authoritarian, and democratic political systems, the Arab Barometer Wave IV data have been used in from the countries of Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Reviewing the related literature shows that, in the democratic countries, extensive research has been conducted on the causes of people's tendency toward democratic systems. But due to the unique political culture in North African countries and the kind of authoritarian political system in them, little research has been done on investigating the reasons for this issue. According to the literature, this paper addresses the effect of social capital, government performance, Islamic values, and the phenomenon of globalization at the level of support for individuals based on a variety of competing models of political systems from the viewpoints of various theories and views.

1. Theories of Political Systems

In this section, using ideas of social capital, government performance, Islamic values, and the phenomenon of globalization, reasons for individuals' tendencies toward different political systems are explained. Arab Barometer data include many variables that measure the effect of various factors on the tendency toward democracy. But the results of the effect of some of the factors on the tendency toward democracy seem not to be much challenged. In this regard, this paper attempts to emphasize the variables that, given the unique context of the North African countries, can be considered as more serious questions. For example, there is no precise answer for the questions whether the values of Islam are consistent with the trend of democracy in these countries or not. Also, while many social capital theories argue that social capital strengthens democracy, Putnam,⁵ by dividing social capital into the two types of vertical and horizontal, shows that each of them can have different effects. For this reason, there is no accurate information on how social capital is affected in North Africa. The performance of the government is also one of the variables with a lot of ambiguity about its outcomes. While many people believe that improving government performance can have a positive effect on democracy, recent views suggest that the type of political environment in the community in question can affect the relationship between government performance and democracy.⁶ However, in this regard, little research has been conducted on the countries in North Africa. Finally, globalization is another variable; although there are various, both optimistic and pessimistic views on its effects on the political attitudes of individuals, there is a scarcity of investigation on how globalization, especially after the Arab revolutions, impacts the North African countries.

⁵ Putnam RD., "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Culture and Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000, p. 223–234.

⁶ Foa RS., "Modernization and Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy* 29 (3), 2018, p. 129–140.

1.1. *Social Capital*

The social capital approach emphasizes the values that connect citizens to daily life, reinforcing their social and loyalties to the community.⁷ This view originates from an old American school known as civic thinking, which includes a range of scholars from Alexis de Tocqueville to Almond and Verba. They consider civil society as a vital part of the strong American democracy. In their views, the community is the source of a “civil culture” that unites citizens in a distinct, and sometimes contradictory, realm of liberal government. Tocqueville, Almond, and Verba all saw voluntary associations as tools that would eventually insure American democracy.⁸

In this regard, the dominant model that explains the roots of social capital is that social capital increases through the interaction of individuals within voluntary associations. For this end, active members gain the skills, competencies, and capabilities that are important for democracy, and this knowledge may be about specific political issues, how political institutions perform, how organizations are managed, or how issues are debated and resolved in a civic manner. Thus, societies are often referred to as “internal schools of democracy”⁹; so, these schools, or civil society associations, reinforce the emotional relationships that are essential for a credible and efficient democratic institution.¹⁰ Packstein believes that social capital seeks to change the system or at least change the government’s policies with two specialties in non-democratic political systems. First, it provides a space for the creation and dissemination of critical discourse against the current government, and second, it facilitates the growth

⁷ Bell D., *Communitarianism and Its Critics*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

⁸ Arneil B., *Diverse Communities: The Problem with Social Capital*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 4.

⁹ Wollebaek D., Selle P., “Does Participation in Voluntary Associations Contribute to Social Capital? The Impact of Intensity, Scope, and Type,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 31 (1), 2002, p. 32–61.

¹⁰ Putnam, 2000, p. 223–234.

of an active opposition against these regimes. High levels of social capital in the last stage of resistance against the authoritarian regime provide resources for the opposition movements and cause a high degree of collective action, which, in turn, encourages and facilitates democratization.¹¹

Social trust is another important element of social capital. In societies lacking social trust and mutual cooperation between the people, there are breakdowns and deep divisions among social groups. In such societies, the lack of social trust leads to the spread of social disorder and, consequently, the creation of authoritarian political systems. In other words, a lack of confidence in a rapid and successful transition to non-authoritarian rule and the consolidation of democratic systems has a very bad effect due to the lack of strengthening of social participation and the lack of the formation of a powerful citizen. It has been argued that increasing social trust facilitates collective action among individuals and encourages the consideration of public interest among them. Promoting social trust among citizens also makes it easier for people to participate in public and civil affairs, helping them build civil society institutions on the basis of democratic needs and expanding the space of democracy in society. This issue, i.e., strengthening the democratic atmosphere in a society, in turn will strengthen the effective cooperation of citizens in public and private affairs. In other words, according to the theory of social capital, social and political trust clearly reinforces civil society and prevents the formation of a climate of authoritarianism in a given society.¹²

Many scholars, including Putnam, consider the distinction between intragroup and intergroup capital for the aim of investigating social capital. Intergroup capital refers to partnerships, cooperation,

¹¹ Paxton P., "Social Capital and Democracy: An Interdependent Relationship," *American Sociological Review* 1, 2002, p. 254–277.

¹² Zmerli S., Newton K., "Social Trust and Attitudes toward Democracy," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2 (4), 2008, p. 706–724.

trust, etc. within a group, and these features benefit individuals within that group. Intergroup capital is one that establishes a link between the groups and thus the society, groups, and even beneficiaries. From this perspective, the formation of a democratic culture requires the transition from intragroup social capital (such as family, ethnic, religious groups, etc.) toward intergroup social capital. Therefore, it is clear that if the social capital of a country is not intergroup in nature, democracy cannot be expected there.¹³

In this regard, Natil et al. argue that, in recent years, many civil actors and social associations in North Africa have faced many challenges because of social conscience, violence, conflicts, and monopolistic political systems. Cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and especially religious differences are among other factors that have affected the formation of cooperation between different social groups.¹⁴ Therefore, the existing social capital in these countries is mostly vertical and intra-group. Accordingly:

Hypothesis 1: A negative correlation between personal trust and support for democratic political systems is expected.

Hypothesis 2: There is a negative relationship between membership in social associations and the attitude to democratic political systems.

1.2. Government Performance

Foweraker and Landman argue that research focused on macroeconomic management, such as inflation, growth, unemployment, social policies, or even executive stability and political violence, can take the form of government performance.¹⁵ It was perhaps Easton who

¹³ Putnam, 2000, p. 223–234.

¹⁴ Natil I., Pierobon C., Tauber L., *The Power of Civil Society in the Middle East and North Africa: Peace-Building, Change, and Development*, Routledge, 2019.

¹⁵ Foweraker J., Landman T., “Constitutional Design and Democratic Performance,” *Democratization* 9 (2), 2002, p. 43–66.

discussed government performance for the first time. He argued that democratic systems are largely based on the citizens' satisfaction with their performance. As Easton suggests, the nature of citizens' support for political systems is shaped by their kind of imagination about how decisions, policies, actions, etc. of the government officials are formed. In other words, if citizens are convinced that the political system is paying attention to their needs and demands, their support for such a system will increase due to its better performance.¹⁶ A lot of empirical research has shown that there are correlations among the components of governmental performance, such as individuals' assessment of the level of corruption in a society,¹⁷ the level of trust in the judicial system,¹⁸ the reduction of violence in a society,¹⁹ economic growth,²⁰ and democracy. But the key question in this area is whether such performance leads to democratic political systems in non-democratic political systems or not?

There are two general views in this regard. According to the first view, as noted above, some scholars believe that better government performance increases support for democracy. But the problem that exists is that this is not the case in all regimes and in all domains. Although better government performance in the political arena, including protecting the rights and freedoms of the people, especially in democratic countries, increases the citizens' support for democratic

¹⁶ Easton D., "A Re-assessment of the Concept of Political Support," *British Journal of Political Science* 5 (4), 1975, p. 435–457.

¹⁷ Mishler W., Rose R., "What are the Origins of Political Trust? Testing Institutional and Cultural Theories in Post-Communist Societies," *Comparative Political Studies* 34 (1), 2001, p. 30–62.

¹⁸ Staton JK., Reenock C., "Substitutable Protections: Credible Commitment Devices and Socioeconomic Insulation," *Political Research Quarterly* 63 (1), 2010, p. 115–128.

¹⁹ Doucouliagos C., "Ulubasoglu MA. Economic Freedom and Economic Growth: Does Specification Make a Difference?" *European Journal of Political Economy* 22 (1), 2006, p. 60–81.

²⁰ Persson T., Tabellini G., "Democracy and Development: The Devil in the Details," *American Economic Review* 96 (2), 2006, p. 319–324.

systems,²¹ improving government economic performance in authoritarian regimes leads to contrariwise results. For this reason, according to the second view, some scholars argue that in non-democratic regimes, in case the effectiveness of these governments increases, the degree of support for such regimes increases for those who live there.²² According to the research findings, the following hypotheses can also be stated.

Hypothesis 3: A negative correlation between economic performance and support for democratic political systems is expected.

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between political performance and the attitude to democratic political systems.

1.3. Islamic Values

Influenced by the nature of Islam and its political revival, many scholars have been studying Islamic values in recent years and have argued that Islamic law includes several codes that govern public relations in addition to the private sphere.²³ The universal Islamic view does not distinguish private life from public life. A Muslim is the one who accepts the orders of God and executes his commands at all personal and public levels. For this reason, politics are also an important issue in Islamic beliefs, because politics are also one of the important issues to be implemented within the framework of the Islamic system.²⁴ Regarding the relationship between Islam and democracy,

²¹ Schmidt MG., "Political Performance and Types of Democracy: Findings from Comparative Studies," *European Journal of Political Research* 41 (1), 2002, p. 147–163.

²² Magalhães PC., "Government Effectiveness and Support for Democracy," *European Journal of Political Research* 53 (1), 2014, p. 77–97.

²³ Inglehart R., *Islam, Gender, Culture, and Democracy: Findings from the World Values Survey and the European Values Survey*, De Sitter Publications, 2003, p. 9.

²⁴ Neusner J., *God's Rule: The Politics of World Religions*, Georgetown University Press, 2003, p. 131.

some scholars, such as Bernard Lewis,²⁵ Samuel Huntington,²⁶ and Ernst Gellner²⁷ argue that, unlike Christianity, Islam is strongly anti-secular in its political orientations. And they show that there is no such thing as secular democratic politics in Islamic political thoughts. In addition, Kedourie argues that principles, institutions, and democratic values are heavily alien to Islamic political traditions, because Islam believes that the only source of sovereignty is God, and that He is the only source of political authority, so that divine ordinances and commands have to be fulfilled in all affairs of social life. This, in view of some thinkers, leads Islam to be regarded as a totalitarian religion.²⁸

But apart from the first view, which emphasizes the incompatibility of Islam and democracy, there is another view that somehow finds a positive relationship between the two. This second view includes several groups with different thoughts. The first group is represented by Sadiq Jawad Sulaiman,²⁹ who sought to find the basic concepts of democracy within Islam by presenting new definitions of Islamic concepts, such as the council, consensus, and allegiance. They appealed to show that Islam has core characteristics of democracy by nature. The second group of scholars, who believe in the compatibility of Islam and democracy, include Fahmi Huwaidi.³⁰ They hold that the Islamic concepts of democracy are unanimously asserted in a way that a particular type of democracy can be created that would not conflict with Islam. Huwaidi argues that democracy originates from the civilization of Christianity, and Islam has a particular civilization for itself. But this difference does not mean contradiction. As

²⁵ Lewis B., *What went Wrong: Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, Oxford University Press, 2002.

²⁶ Huntington, 1996.

²⁷ Gellner E., *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*, Routledge, 2013.

²⁸ Choueiri Y., "The Political Discourse of Contemporary Islamist Movements," *Islamic Fundamentalism*, Routledge, 2018, p. 19–33.

²⁹ Kurzman C., *Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1998, p. 98.

³⁰ Huwaidi F., *Islam and Democracy*, El-Moustakbal *El-Arabi*, 1993, p. 4–37.

a defender of democracy, he considers the combination of Islam and democracy essential.

The third group of scholars includes those who favor a harmonious relationship between Islam and democracy, such as Mohammad Khatami. They seek to establish a kind of religious democracy by presenting new readings of Islam and democracy and rejecting the foundations of secularism and liberalism. Khatami believes that, as democracy can be established within liberal systems, it can also be created within the political system of religion – with the difference that the vacuum of spirituality created in Western systems can be filled in the political system of Islamic democracy by combining spirituality with a religious government.³¹

Finally, there is the last group of scholars who believe in the compatibility of Islam and democracy. Among them, Norris and Inglehart,³² regardless of the theoretical issues and merely based on empirical evidence, consider that Islam is conventional with the views and actions of Muslims and argue that there have been many obstacles in the history of Islam to realizing democratic ideals; however, most people in Islamic countries now support democratic institutions and consider democracy as the most important political model. Investigating Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria, Tessler concludes that their citizens' strong Islamic attachment by no means discourages them from supporting democracy.³³ According to what has been discussed, the present research expects that:

Hypothesis 5: We do not expect Islamic values to have a negative effect on the tendency of individuals to have a democratic political system.

³¹ Esposito V., Esposito J.L., Voll J.O., *Islam and Democracy*, Oxford University Press on Demand, 2001, p. 2.

³² Norris P., Inglehart R., "Islamic Culture and Democracy: Testing the 'Clash of Civilizations' Thesis," *Comparative Sociology* 1 (3–4), 2002, p. 235–263.

³³ Tessler M., "Do Islamic Orientations Influence Attitudes toward Democracy in the Arab World? Evidence from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 43 (3–5), 2002, p. 229–49.

1.4. Globalization

The term *globalization* was probably posited by Reiser and Davies.³⁴ Then, many scholars around the world reconfigured it after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the late 20th century. Although the concept has long been presented, it seems that the meaning of this concept is still vague and unclear, owing to different academic concerns and different ideological contexts of scholars who have defined this concept. Some, with an emphasis on the economic dimension of globalization, have meant integrating all aspects of the economy in a global context,³⁵ and some, like Held et al., emphasize its political aspects and the establishment of mutual relationships among countries.³⁶ Another group of researchers, such as Taylor, conceive of globalization as Westernization.³⁷ For a general definition of globalization, the interpretation of time and space compression used by scholars such as Harvey³⁸ and Anthony Giddens³⁹ seems to be a comprehensive definition covering more than one aspect of this phenomenon.

Globalization, according to Giddens' interpretation, introduces a new identity and generalizes it. Culturally, globalization refers to a situation in which indigenous culture and traditions are undermined, and a kind of cultural harmonization is promoted. The interpretation of "globalization" has transformed even in personal identity. The transformation may be so widespread that many aspects of indivi-

³⁴ Reiser OL., Davies B., *Planetary Democracy: An Introduction to Scientific Humanism and Applied Semantic*, New York: Creative Age Press, 1944, p. 212–219.

³⁵ Hirst P., Thompson G., *Globalisation: Ten Frequently Asked Questions and Some Surprising Answers*, Soundings London Lawrence and Wishart, 1996, p. 48.

³⁶ Held D., McGrew A., Goldblatt D., Perraton J., "Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, Culture," *International Journal* 54 (4), 1999, p. 1–10.

³⁷ Taylor PJ., "Izations of the World: Americanization, Modernization and Globalization," *Demystifying Globalization*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000, p. 49–70.

³⁸ Harvey D., *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1989, p. 11.

³⁹ Giddens A., *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*, Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 19.

duals' private lives also evolve. In Islamic societies, where religious beliefs and Islamic value systems form an important part of Muslim identity, there is also a conflict between the identity of the process of globalization and the removal of religious boundaries.

But there are different perspectives on the relationship between globalization and democracy, many of which, based on their specific reasons, emphasize the influence of globalization on democracy. According to the first view of globalization through economic growth, on the one hand, it strengthened the middle class and the level of education, and on the other, reduced the phenomenon of income among the social strata of a population; all of which contributed to the development of democracy in a society.⁴⁰ The second group of scholars focus on the effect of the increase in international trade on democracy, arguing that the expansion of international trade in the world will strengthen political peace and stability in societies, which may cause that governments' commercial interests increase their need for democracy.⁴¹ The third view argues that globalization, on the one hand, reduces the cost of information circulation and increases the contact of people in authoritarian countries with democratic systems, and on the other hand, improves the efficiency of international non-governmental organizations in authoritarian societies. In this sense, the expansion of such networks in communities helps protect pro-democracy forces in authoritarian regimes and strengthen democratic systems within them.⁴² According to the fourth view, globalization causes authoritarian governments to reduce their control over economic and social spheres. With the weakening of the government, the role of the civil society in the administration of society becomes

⁴⁰ Held D., "Democracy: From City-States to a Cosmopolitan Order," *Political Studies* 40, 1992, p. 10–39.

⁴¹ Oneal JR., Russett B., "Assessing the Liberal Peace with Alternative Specifications: Trade Still reduces Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 36 (4), 1999, p. 423–442.

⁴² Risse T., Sikkink K., "The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms into Domestic Practices: Introduction," *Cambridge Studies in International Relations* 1, 1999, p. 1–38.

more vibrant, thus increasing the readiness of citizens to participate in the political space of the society.⁴³ The fifth view mainly emphasizes the strengthening of domestic institutions and shows that globalization cultivates the transparency and accountability of domestic institutions. This would be done through an increased efficiency of a system based on property rights, fair trials, economic openness, rule of law, and human rights; hence, it would increase the space to support democratic systems.⁴⁴ Finally, in line with the sixth view, globalization can also result in citizens' support for democratic systems via the dissemination of democratic ideas in different parts of the world. Economic development, resulting from globalization, facilitates the flow of information and international citizen calls, and this leads to the spread of democratic ideas across the globe.⁴⁵

It should be noted that other researchers are not so optimistic about the issue. For example, some scholars argue that globalization is dependent on a number of issues – such as government policy-making, the position of countries in the existing world order, the identity of the winners and the losers, and the current level of democracy in countries. Although economic crises of globalization seem to have forced authoritarian regimes to move toward democratic systems, in case these crises are properly managed by the authoritarian regimes, the position of the existing authoritarian leaders may be strengthened instead of being weakened. Therefore, the effects of globalization cannot be shown in the same way.⁴⁶ Therefore, it is hypothesized that some internal and international factors in countries can influence the relationship between globalization and the tendency of individuals to

⁴³ Roberts B., "The Social Context of Citizenship in Latin America," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 20 (1), 1996, p. 38–65.

⁴⁴ Keck ME., Sikkink K., *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Cornell University Press, 2014.

⁴⁵ Starr H., "Democratic Dominoes: Diffusion Approaches to the Spread of Democracy in the International System," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35 (2), 1991, p. 356–381.

⁴⁶ Haggard S., Kaufman RR., *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*, Princeton University Press, 2018.

favor democratic systems. Accordingly, the following research hypothesis can be proposed:

Hypothesis 6: Respondents who support more globalization processes tend to have a more democratic political system.

2. Data and Methods

In order to investigate the research hypotheses, interviews were held with 4800 citizens from Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia; this was conducted by the Arab Barometer Wave IV during 2016–2017. Given that the present study was about the Islamic democratic political system, only the views given by Muslims were examined, while other citizens, mostly Christians, were excluded. Accordingly, the sample was comprised of 1146 citizens from Egypt, 1199 from Algeria, 1199 from Morocco, and 1200 from Tunisia.

Table 1. Countries in the Arab Barometer.

	Egypt	Algeria	Tunisia	Morocco
Population (millions) ^b	93 500 000	40 800 000	11 300 000	34 700 000
GNI per capita (US\$) ^c	\$3,548	\$4,160	\$3,828	\$2,847
Electoral Process ^d	3	4	5	11
Institutional setting ^e	Semi-presidential republic	Presidential republic	Parliamentary republic	Constitutional monarchy

Notes: ^a, ^b, ^c Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2018.”; ^d Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2017.”; ^e The World Bank, “The World Bank 2017.”; ^f The World Bank, “The World Bank 2015.”

Regarding the political and social conditions in the countries under study, the results of Freedom House data in 2018 show that while Egypt and Algeria do not have the right political freedoms, Tunisia and Morocco, respectively, enjoy proper and fairly proper political freedoms. Also, results of the data obtained from Freedom House indicate that although all four countries in North Africa have relatively

modern political systems, the electoral process in Tunisia (with the parliamentary republic political system) has more democratic depth than other countries studied in the present study (see Table 1).

2.1. Measuring Citizens' Attitudes toward Political Systems

In this study, in order to better understand the citizens' attitudes toward the democratic political system as a dependent variable, it was measured in three models. The first model is related to a place where the people do not believe in an electoral and party system, but they believe that the ruling political system in the country should be governed solely by Islamic law and Shari'ah. The results of this study shown in Table 2 depict that 60.1% of the participants in these four countries oppose this model. It was mostly opposed by Tunisian citizens.

The second model shows attitudes toward the authoritarian political system. According to this model, the political system of a country is supposed to be based on the decisions of an authoritarian leader. The results indicate that around 70.3% of the citizens' object to this model, suggesting that North African citizens do not support a lot of authoritarian attitudes. The results also show that the Moroccan citizens were opposed to this model the most. The level of opposition to the authoritarian political system seems to have fallen in comparison with the previous Arab Barometer Wave surveys that took place in 2013 and 2014. The reason for this might be owing to people's fear of the spread of chaos and the Syrianization of the society.

Finally, the third model deals with the attitude that is measured by the level of citizens' desire to compete with all political groups in the parliamentary elections. The results indicate that only 23.2% of the citizens were opposed to such a political system and that most of them, with varying degrees, agree to an electoral competition happening between all political parties in a country. Nevertheless, Moroccan citizens had the most support for a democratic political sys-

tem in their country. Another important point in this regard is that the degree of support for democratic political systems in the investigated countries has increased in comparison with the past.

Table 2. The degree of opposition to Shari'ah-based, authoritarian, and democratic political systems.

	Algeria	Egypt	Morocco	Tunisia	Total
A. Shari'ah political system	60.1%	68.2%	52.3%	70.5%	60.1%
B. Authoritarian political system	67.5%	66.5%	77.6%	69.6%	70.3%
C. Democratic political system	23.5%	27.5%	9.7%	32.1%	23.2%
Correlation of A with B	0.17***	0.24***	0.10***	0.06*	0.11***
Correlation of A with C	-0.04	-0.10***	-.29***	-0.03	-.07***
Correlation of B with C	-0.10***	-0.20***	-0.12***	-0.11***	-0.15***

The results of correlation between different political systems illustrate that the correlation between a democratic political system and a Shari'ah-based political system (-0.08) is significant. The same significance was evident for a democratic political system and an authoritarian political system (-.11). Additionally, the Spearman correlation coefficients suggest that the degree of this correlation is insignificant, so it cannot be argued that there is a necessarily strong contradiction between a democratic political system and the other political systems from the viewpoint of North African Arab citizens.

2.2. Measuring Independent Variables and Hypotheses

In order to explain why some Arab citizens in North African countries avoid or tend to a democratic political system, in addition to the

demographic variables, the indicators of social capital, government performance, Islamic values, and globalization have been investigated via multivariate regression models. The dependent variable consists of three 4-point scale variables: the individuals' tendency to elect only Islamic parties in a country (a Shari'ah-based political system), a political system governed by a ruler who rules without considering public opinions (i.e., an authoritarian political system), and the election campaigns among all the existing political parties, including the left and right, or from the national and Islamic parties, in a country (a democratic political system). A combination of the two variables of the Shari'ah-based and authoritarian systems was initially intended, but this was impossible due to their low value of the correlation coefficient. In the original questionnaire of the examined dependent variables, number 1 indicates a strong tendency toward the desired political system and the number 4 shows no tendency to it. Furthermore, in order to better understand the tests, these scores were recoded so that the numbers in this research indicating the citizens' tendency refer to the same political system. Also, due to the fact that the dependent variable scale was ordinal in nature, an ordinal logistic regression was used. In this regard, given that the variables of this regression were similar to those of the hierarchical regression, the results of the hierarchical regression were reported.

Social capital: In order to measure social capital, interspecific trust and associational membership have been used as the required indicators. Both variables are in a two-degree scale from 1 to 2, the codes of which were recoded for better understanding. The mean visibility trust scores were 1.20, and the mean membership scores for social associations was 1.12.

Government performance: In this study, this variable has been measured based on citizens' assessment of the two indicators of the degree of individuals' satisfaction with government socioeconomic performance as well as their satisfaction with the rights and freedoms of their countries. The socioeconomic performance variable has been

measured at a 5-point scale from 1 to 5. The recoded mean scores of all variables of individuals' satisfaction with the government's socio-economic performance, containing three variables, were 2.43, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.80. Also, the mean for political performance variables, containing five variables scored from 1 to 4, was 2.72, and the Cronbach's alpha was 0.80.

Islamic values: For measuring Islamic values, the variable was divided into two components of legal and identity. Identity was placed on a three-point scale ranging from religious to non-religious, with a mean reciprocal of 2.23, and the legal component was on a 5-point scale ranging from *always* to *never*, with a recoded mean scores of 3.36.

Globalization: Indicators of the citizens' support for the expansion of global communications, Westernization, Israeli-Palestinian peace-making, and opposition to ISID were used to measure the phenomenon of globalization. The global communication variable was at a 5-point scale with a recoded mean score of 3.78; support for Westernization was a 4-point scale with a recoded mean score of 2.98, and a two-point scale for Israeli-Palestinian peace-making, including support and opposition, were measured with a recoded mean score of 1.49. Moreover, the opposition to the goals and objectives of ISIS also had a 4-degree item with a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 4, and mean of this variable in the studied countries was 3.90. Of course, this variable was measured only in Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, as the respondents in Egypt did not answer this question. Therefore, this variable was not tested in the analysis of the Egyptian case.

Controls: age, gender, education, and income were used as the control variables. Different results have been obtained in relation to the relationship between these variables by supporting the democratic political system in the opposing countries. Accordingly, in this research, the relationship between these variables and the democratic political system is to be examined.

Table 3. Description of the measurement level and mean of research variables.

variables	measurement levels	mean
<i>Age</i>	Scale	40.00
<i>Gender</i>	Nominal	50% male and 50% female
<i>Education</i>	Ordinal (7-point scale)	3.41
<i>Income</i>	Ordinal (2-point scale)	1.42
<i>trust</i>	Ordinal (2-point scale)	1.20
<i>associational membership</i>	Ordinal (2-point scale)	1.12
<i>Economic performance</i>	Scale	2.43
<i>Political Performance</i>	Scale	2.72
<i>Islamic view (identity)</i>	Ordinal (2-point scale)	2.23
<i>Islamic view (legal)</i>	Ordinal (2-point scale)	3.36
<i>Global Communications</i>	Ordinal (5-point scale)	3.78
<i>Westernization</i>	Ordinal (4-point scale)	2.98
<i>Palestine-Israel</i>	Ordinal (2-point scale)	1.49
<i>Opposition to ISID</i>	Ordinal (4-point scale)	3.90
<i>Shari'ah-based political system</i>	Ordinal (4-point scale)	1.54
<i>Authoritarian political system</i>	Ordinal (4-point scale)	1.39
<i>democratic political system</i>	Ordinal (4-point scale)	2.61

3. Results

A hierarchical regression model was employed for investigating the research hypotheses. It was shown that the Arab Barometer data have missing segments, which were initially intended to be used to replace the mean scores of that variable in each country. However, given the fact that the survey of countries had a relatively large sample size, and, after the initial analysis, it was found that the results of the use of the average replacement method did not differ significantly from the method of knock-out for the missing data, the missing data were used.

Table 4. A hierarchical regression analysis of support for a Shari'ah-based political system.

Predictor	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4	Model5	Model6
<i>Age</i>	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.04*	-.04*	-.04*
<i>Gender</i>	-.00	-.00	-.00	-.01	-.01	-.01
<i>Education</i>	-.12***	-.13***	-.12***	-.14***	-.13***	-.11**
<i>Income</i>	-.05**	-.05**	-.05**	-.04*	-.04*	-.08***
<i>Trust</i>		.00	-.00	-.01	-.01	.00
<i>associational membership</i>		.03*	.04*	.04*	.04*	.05**
<i>Economic performance</i>			.09***	.09***	.09***	.08***
<i>Political Performance</i>			-.10***	-.09***	-.08***	-.10***
<i>Islamic view (identity)</i>				.06**	.04*	.07***
<i>Islamic view (legal)</i>				.13***	.11***	.11***
<i>Global Communications</i>					-.13***	-.12***
<i>Westernization</i>					-.02	-.03*
<i>Palestine-Israel</i>					-.02	-.00
<i>Opposition to ISID</i>					-.04*	-.03
<i>Algeria</i>						.22***
<i>Morocco</i>						.11***
<i>Tunisia</i>						.18***
<i>R-Square</i>	.022	.023	.035	.59	.080	.110
<i>F</i>	14.9***	10.5***	12.0***	16.7***	16.4***	19.3***

Notes: standardized coefficient

* $p > 0.05$. ** $p > 0.01$. *** $p > 0.001$.

Table 3 illustrates the effects of the variables studied on the protection of a Shari'ah-based political system in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The results of the final research model regarding the effect of demographic factors indicate that increasing age, educa-

tional level, and income significantly reduce the tendency of individuals toward Shari'ah-based political systems. Among the variables of social capital, only membership in social associations has significant influence on the tendency to support a Shari'ah-based political system. This seems to indicate that the type of social networks available in these countries is likely to be largely intra-group or vertical and cannot affect the tendency toward democracy.

Taking into account the final research model, the results show the significant effect of government performance. In this regard, improving the economic performance of governments leads to a significant tendency of individuals toward Shari'ah-based political systems. On the contrary, the strengthening of the political function of governments on people's orientation towards these systems has a negative and significant effect. Moreover, as expected, both dimensions of Islamic values significantly strengthen people's desire for a Shari'ah-based political system. The results also indicate that there is a significant and negative effect on the support for a Shari'ah-based political system regarding the dimensions of globalization. The influence of the desire for Arab-Israeli peace and opposition to the aims of ISIL on the inclination toward the political system of a Shari'ah-based country is meaningful. Finally, when we eliminated Egypt as a reference dummy variable, the results reveal that people of all the studied countries are more inclined toward a Shari'ah-based system than Egyptians. Therefore, it can be argued that the differences in crafting also play a significant role in the citizens' desire for a Shari'ah-based political system.

Table 3 illustrates the effects of the studied variables on the protection of an authoritarian political system in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The results of the final model of the research show that among the demographic variables, the level of education has a significant negative effect on the tendency toward an authoritarian political system, indicating people less eager to have this kind of political system. Membership in social associations is another variable that has a significant effect on the tendency toward an authoritarian

political system and that has led people to this kind of a political system. On the other hand, the results indicate that improving the political performance of the government significantly reduces the people's tendency to support an authoritarian political system.

Table 5. A hierarchical regression analysis of support for the authoritarian political system.

Predictor	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4	Model5	Model6
<i>Age</i>	.03	.03	.03	.05	.04	.01
<i>Gender</i>	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.01	-.01	-.02
<i>Education</i>	-.11***	-.11***	-.11***	-.10***	-.10***	-.09***
<i>Income</i>	-.00	-.00	-.00	-.01	-.00	-.01
<i>Trust</i>		-.00	-.00	-.00	-.00	-.01
<i>Associational membership</i>		.02	.02	.02	.02	.06**
<i>Economic performance</i>			.03	.03	.03	.03
<i>Political Performance</i>			-.04*	-.05*	-.04*	-.04*
<i>Islamic view (identity)</i>				-.05**	-.05**	-.02
<i>Islamic view (legal)</i>				-.06**	-.05**	-.04*
<i>Global Communications</i>					-.08***	-.08***
<i>Westernization</i>					.01	.01
<i>Palestine-Israel</i>					.08***	.06**
<i>Opposition to ISID</i>					-.03	-.03
<i>Algeria</i>						.03
<i>Morocco</i>						-.09***
<i>Tunisia</i>						.12***
<i>R-Square</i>	.017	.018	.020	.028	.041	.068
<i>F</i>	11.7***	8.0***	6.08***	7.5***	8.2***	11.4***

Notes: standardized coefficient

* $p > 0.05$. ** $p > 0.01$. *** $p > 0.001$.

Besides, an interesting point in this table lies in Islamic values. Findings in this regard indicate that both the identity and legal dimensions of Islamic values have significant and negative effects on the tendency toward an authoritarian political system. The findings also suggest that the expansion of global communication has a significant and negative effect on a people's desire for an authoritarian political system. But the results show that the support of Arab-Israeli peace is positively and significantly influenced by the desire for an authoritarian political system. This finding seems to agree with the views of Haggard and Kauffman. Haggard and Kauffman⁴⁷ argue that all dimensions of globalization are not necessarily associated with the spread of democracy, and this depends on different internal and external factors. Finally, when Egypt is eliminated as a reference dummy variable, the results show that, although Moroccans were seen to be less inclined to authoritarian politics compared to Egypt, the Tunisians were more inclined to an authoritarian political system than Egyptian citizens.

Table 3 illustrates effects of the studied variables on the protection of the democratic political system in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The final results of Model 6 indicate that none of the demographic variables have a significant effect on the tendency toward a democratic political system. Also, social trust and membership in social associations, which are considered as two dimensions of social capital, did not have a significant effect on the tendency toward a democratic political system. But the political function of the government was an important variable, in which the citizen's tendency toward democratic political views significantly increased. Islamic values did not have any significant effect on the tendency toward democracy. The significance of this issue is that, based on the results of the research, Islamic values did not act as a barrier to democracy.

⁴⁷ Haggard and Kauffman, 2018.

Table 6. A hierarchical regression analysis of support for the democratic political system.

Predictor	Model1	Model2	Model3	Model4	Model5	Model6
<i>Age</i>	.01	.01	.00	-.01	-.01	.02
<i>Gender</i>	-.05**	-.04*	-.04*	-.05*	-.04*	-.03
<i>Education</i>	.03	.00	.00	.00	-.00	.02
<i>Income</i>	.05*	.04*	.02	.02	.02	.00
<i>Trust</i>		-.05**	-.05**	-.05**	-.05**	-.01
<i>Associational membership</i>		.10***	.08***	.08***	.08***	.02
<i>Economic performance</i>			-.00	-.00	-.01	-.02
<i>Political Performance</i>			.16***	.16***	.15***	.12***
<i>Islamic view (identity)</i>				.05*	.06**	.02
<i>Islamic view (legal)</i>				.02	.02	.01
<i>Global Communications</i>					.06**	.05**
<i>Westernization</i>					.04*	.03
<i>Palestine-Israel</i>					-.00	-.00
<i>Opposition to ISID</i>					-.01	-.02
<i>Algeria</i>						.02
<i>Morocco</i>						.27***
<i>Tunisia</i>						.00
<i>R-Square</i>	.008	.021	.045	.048	.054	.115
<i>F</i>	5.1***	9.1***	15.3***	13.1***	10.7***	19.9***

Notes: standardized coefficient

* $p > 0.05$. ** $p > 0.01$. *** $p > 0.001$.

Among the variables of globalization, the expansion of global communication in this table also served as a meaningful variable and positively increased the tendency of citizens to a democratic political system. Other globalization variables had no significant effect on the dependent variable. Finally, when Egypt is omitted as a variable

of reference to livestock variables, the results show that Moroccans are significantly more in favor of a democratic political system than Egyptians. In this context, R-square changes indicate that the addition of the studied countries as an independent variable to the fifth model caused a significant increase in its rate (from 10.7 to 19.9). This indicates the importance of social and geographical grounds in explaining the tendency of individuals to a democratic political system.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study attempted to investigate what influences North African citizens' tendencies toward different types of political systems, especially a democratic political system. Accordingly, using the related literature, several factors influencing the political orientation of citizens toward different types of political systems were investigated in the present research. First, the study examined the effects of demographic variables. The results indicated that some of the demographic variables, especially the level of education, had a significant effect on reducing the tendency of individuals to be in favor of a Shari'ah-based and authoritarian political system, while it did not necessarily lead to their tendency to support democratic political systems. Age and levels of income were other variables that influenced people's political orientations and reduced the people's tendencies toward Shari'ah-based political systems.

In addition, this study examined the effect of social capital on a variety of political systems. The results, in the final models, revealed that associational membership increased; however, it had no significant effect on the willingness of individuals to have a democratic political system; the tendency of the investigated citizens toward an authoritative and Shari'ah-based political system did increase. As already mentioned, one of the reasons for this might probably be the high level of vertical social capital compared to the horizontal shift in the North African countries. According to Inglehart and Welzel,

vertical trust and hierarchical links limit social radius. Such a kind of social capital is more linked with authoritarian attitudes than with democratic ones. Conversely, horizontal ties and generalized trust among the citizens reflect the peoples' equalization within society and strengthen democratic culture in it.⁴⁸ In this regard, many studies have also concluded that the social capital of Arabs in North Africa is largely horizontal and cannot create a democratic culture. Many studies show that the social capital of Arabs in North Africa is largely horizontal and cannot create a democratic culture. For example, based on World Values Survey Wave V data on Egypt, while the level of trust among citizens was 95.3%, only 21.5% of them believed that people could be trusted in general. For this reason, it can be argued that, despite such a kind of social capital in countries in North Africa, one cannot expect its positive effect on democracy. Also, the insignificant effect of the variable of social trust on the tendency toward a democratic political system can be justified by these ideas.

In the third model, the study examined the effect of a government's economic and political performance on a variety of political systems. The research results, in the final models, indicated that government economic performance had a significant effect on the tendency of individuals to a Shari'ah-based political system. In other words, based on the theories, it is expected that the process of modernization and economic development in democratic countries would improve the mentality of individuals toward democratic political systems. But in North Africa, the process of economic development and improving government economic performance has not been able to affect the citizens' mentality about political development. Thus, government economic performance is expected to have a different effect on people's mentality, influenced by the type of political context in those countries. The results also show that, in line with the research theories, improving the political performance of the government has led the citizens to a demo-

⁴⁸ Inglehart R., Welzel C., *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, Cambridge University Press, 2005.

cratic political system. The importance of the variable of political performance becomes greater. According to Tables 4 and 5, it is evident that this variable has had a negative effect on the people's tendency to Shari'ah-based and authoritarian political systems.

The next model studied in this research is the Islamic values model. Results made it obvious that, firstly, they did not affect democratic political attitude. None of the dimensions of Islamic values followed a political trend. Second, the findings showed that, contrary to Huntington and Gellner's views, Islamic values did not contradict with the individuals' orientation toward a democratic political system (Table 6). However, Islamic values did not have a significant negative effect on support for democratic political systems, while even the legal dimension of Islamic values had a positive effect on reducing the citizens' tendency toward authoritarian political systems. The findings presented in Table 4 show that the main influence of Islamic values has been on the tendency toward a Shari'ah-based political system because such individuals reject secularism and argue that Islamic values should enter politics in such a way that there should be no contradiction between the political laws declared by the government and the laws of Shari'ah.

Fifth, the final research model examines the effect of globalization on citizens' political attitudes toward different types of political systems. The results obtained for this research showed that the expansion of global communications, while reducing the tendency of individuals to authoritarian political systems and Shari'ah-based political system, has created a positive attitude toward democratic political systems. As confirmed in the present study and outlined in the theoretical section, it was expected that the development of global communication as an integral part of the globalization process is increasing the tendency toward democracy and reducing the willingness of individuals to support authoritarian and religious political systems. Moreover, the results revealed that Westernization has not had any significant effect on the protection of democratic systems. In

this regard, the study of contemporary history of North African countries showed that Western countries had a fair relationship with the authoritarian political regimes of Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, and has not done much to engage in political events within these countries. In this regard, even the overthrow of the Mohamed Morsiled government in Egypt, as well as the military coup, did not cause European countries to react to it. Therefore, it is natural that citizens living in these countries also do not react sharply under the influence of Western political behavior. Findings revealed that opposition to the goals of ISIL and support for Arab-Israeli peace did not have any significant effect on supporting a democratic political system.

Finally, the effects of territorial differences on supporting different political systems were finally addressed. In this regard, the results showed that citizens of Morocco were more interested in democratic political systems than people living in other studied countries. However, the most important obtained point was that, based on R-Square's changes in Table 6, territorial change was the most important role in analyzing the process of supporting democratic political systems. This was an indicator of the existence of cultural and political differences among the northern countries of Africa.

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